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ABSTRACT

This monograph is a discussion of the nature of master teacher/career ladder programs and related issues and implications for principals. Delineated in the principal's role in career ladder/master teacher programs against the following framework of issues: (1) the clarity of the school board's plan and its resolve to implement the program; (2) the specific purpose of teacher evaluation in the program (involvement or accountability); (3) the range of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards available to teachers; (4) the effect of the plan on teacher morale; (5) the level of district commitment and support; (6) the degree of parental involvement; and (7) the personal and professional development needs of principals. A scenario is then provided that illustrates the elements of an ideal career ladder/master teacher program. An appendix contains a set of questions that principals planning or implementing career ladder/master teacher programs may use for self-assessment or to survey the perceptions of others. (TE)

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Career Ladder/ Master Teacher Programs

Implications for Principals

By James C. Parker

The National Association of
Secondary School Principals
Reston, Virginia

About the Author: James C. Parker is associate dean, School of Education, California State University-Dominguez Hills, Carson, Calif. He served as NASSP professor in residence from June 1984 until January 1985.

Scott D. Thomson, *Executive Director*
Thomas F. Koerner, *Editor and Director of Publications*
Carol Bruce, *Assistant Director of Publications*
Patricia Lucas George, *Assistant Editor*

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Foreword

Career ladder and master teacher (CL/MT) plans are prominent today among the several teacher incentive programs being developed in states and school districts throughout the country. Properly funded and implemented, these plans have potential for further promoting the professionalism of teaching in the nation's schools. They may also be important for sustaining public support of education's role in our democratic society.

School principals only rarely have been included in the planning and design of CL/MT programs, but they surely have much to do with their ultimate success or failure. Principals are in the position to assure that appropriate program implementation and assessment occur. They strongly influence the climate in which that implementation takes place.

CL/MT programs need informed and supportive administrators at the building level.

In this monograph, NASSP Professor-in-Residence James C. Parker discusses the nature of master teacher/career ladder programs and related issues and implications for principals. He carefully distinguishes among merit pay plans that provide more pay for ***better work***, staff utilization plans that reward ***difficult or badly needed work***, and CL/MT programs that pay more for ***more and better work***.

Career ladder and master teacher programs offer a particularly wide variety of options. Master teacher plans provide two levels of pay, status, and responsibility, whereas career ladder programs offer teachers multi-step status and advancement. Either type of program can be adjusted to fit the needs of an individual school and its faculty through use of various incentives.

The author delineates the principal's role in career ladder/master teacher programs against the following framework of issues.

- The clarity of the school board's plan and its resolve to implement the program
- The specific purpose of teacher evaluation in the program (involvement or accountability)
- The range of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards available to teachers
- The effect of the plan on teacher morale

- The level of district commitment and support
- The degree of parental involvement
- The personal and professional development needs of principals.

The Appendix contains a discerning set of questions that principals planning or implementing career ladder/master teacher programs may use for self-assessment or to survey the perceptions of others. The questions alone would justify the wide use of this valuable document.

James W. Keefe
NASSP
Director of Research

Introduction

Many professional educators, along with a large segment of the public, believe the quality of teaching is deteriorating because the most competent people are discouraged from entering or remaining in the teaching profession. Those well-qualified teachers that remain, critics say, often lose the motivation to consistently give their best effort.

Recommendations addressing this problem often involve higher base pay, merit pay, or similar teacher incentives. In *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) recommended: "Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based."

The National Science Board Commission (1983) recommended virtually the same in *Educating Americans for the 21st Century*: "State and local governments should reward excellence in teaching and should provide opportunities for high quality teachers to move up a salary and status ladder without leaving the classroom."

A Congressional Merit Pay Task Force report encouraged experiments with performance-based pay, and several states and many local school districts have instituted incentive programs. By the 1984–85 school year, at least 5 states were implementing or piloting career ladder/master teacher plans, and another 11 states had mandated that such programs be developed. Approximately 10 states have such plans under study or pending legislation. Most national educational associations have considered and addressed merit pay.

In 1984, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the American Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals jointly published a monograph, *Teacher Incentives: A Tool for Effective Management*, describing a variety of merit systems and rewards available in both the public and private sectors.

The NASSP also sponsored this current study to address the implications for principals of teacher incentive programs.

We will employ the following definitions in the report:

- *Merit pay plans* refer to those offering more pay for better work.

- *Personnel distribution plans* describe those providing additional pay for difficult or badly needed work.
- *Career ladder/master teacher plans* are those involving more pay for more and better work. Our prime focus will be on career ladder and master teacher plans.

I. *Career Ladder/Master Teacher Plans*

Career ladder plans characteristically specify three or four levels or stages in a teaching career. The first stage, for probationary teachers, usually includes all teachers not yet on tenure. The second stage is for "career" or regular teachers, often those with tenure. Advancement to the next stages, called senior or associate teachers and master teachers, is by individual initiative. Level of educational attainment, years of experience, and recognized teaching proficiency are considered in these promotions.

Each step up the ladder is based on systematic evaluation. Each step brings increased pay and increasing responsibilities, such as assisting other teachers, designing curriculum, or leading specific instructional improvement efforts. Typically, those at the top of the career ladder are offered extended contracts (1–2 months in the summer) for curriculum planning and development projects. In some cases, master teachers assist in the evaluation of other teachers.

Both career ladder and master teacher programs utilize various incentives:

- Differentiated rules and regulations such as additional job privileges
- Extrinsic rewards including pay, praise, and promotion
- Intrinsic rewards including the opportunity for greater determination, expression, and professional autonomy.

Career ladder and master teacher programs are similar in that they both give teachers increased pay, higher status, and more responsibility.

Master teacher programs, however, do not have multi-step levels with the concomitant longer term incentives that are inherent in such a hierarchy. Both types of incentive programs feature financial and status advantages that encourage teachers to remain in teaching, and more varied work responsibilities that tend to decrease boredom and burnout. Both incentives serve to attract more able candidates to the teaching field.

Surveys have shown that, by a four-to-one margin, the general public and teachers favor the development of career ladder plans with extra pay for additional duties. Yet, the public and

teachers differ markedly in their views about merit pay. The public, by a four-to-one ratio, favors merit pay, while two of every three teachers oppose merit plans. The chief reasons for opposition cited by teachers in the 1983 Gallup poll were the difficulties in evaluating teaching performance, the perception that administrators cannot or will not evaluate fairly, and the likelihood that merit pay would create morale problems. These reasons suggest that career ladder/master teacher plans may have greater probability of success than merit plans.

But what if schools and districts move unthinkingly into career ladder/master teacher plans? Let's listen to a conversation between two principals: Arnold Beckon of South High School, and Ed Weeks of North High School.

Scenario One

It's 4 p.m. on a dreary December day just before the winter break.

Arnold: Every year I say to myself and to the faculty, let's just "hold the fort," and not upset this last week before the holidays. And you know what? I lost my cool today at lunch. I shouted loud enough to be heard in the entire lunchroom for two boys to come immediately to my office. You know what they were doing?

Ed: No. What?

Arnold: They were speaking in sign language to each other. It looked very suspicious to me. Who knows, maybe it was vulgar and that's why they were using sign language.

Ed: You *are* getting paranoid. Next thing I'll hear from you is that teachers are using sign language during faculty meetings just to keep you in the dark about the district's new teacher incentives plan. I wish my teachers would use sign language so I couldn't hear their embarrassing questions like, "How does the plan promote the professional status of teachers?"

Arnold: Interesting! I've gotten that one too. But the most embarrassing one to me has been, "Does the plan promote competent school management?"

Ed: Your paranoia *is* showing! Don't be upset; I'm just kidding. I don't even know what the criteria are for

each of the five levels on the career ladder, except for the first level. It's the only one that's written up, you know.

Arnold: Yeah, I know. And you know how snide some teachers can be when they have you in a corner.

Don't say it, I know I'm paranoid. They keep punching me with (sing-song voice) "Do I ***look*** like a master teacher?" "Do I ***talk*** like a master teacher?" "Do I ***walk*** like a master teacher?"

How ***can*** I know if they talk or teach like a master teacher? The criteria for career teacher, professional educator, and senior educator haven't been written, much less for master educator.

Ed: Did you say master ***educator***?

Arnold: Yes. That's what it says right here in the executive summary, which you obviously haven't read yet. No wonder you're not paranoid. You don't even know what's coming after you!

Ed: What's the difference between a teacher and an educator?

Arnold: How should I know? Only the criteria for probationary teacher have been written.

Ed: Well, since you seem to know all about the district's new career ladder/master teacher—excuse me, master educator—plan, I thought you would have that distinction worked out. You know you have loads of building autonomy to apply the plan to your particular situation; at least that's the message of every central office briefing so far.

Arnold: You bet I've got building autonomy. Last time I looked, I had blank paper for everything except the first year of the plan. Why the central office wanted to implement this plan, such as it is, before they defined concepts, purposes, objectives, standards, ***and*** criteria beats me. As I see it, all we have is an idea, the names of five career steps with tantalizingly promised money, and a one-year program. I'm waiting for some guidelines from the central office on the rest of the program before I go out on the "autonomy" limb. I

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By James C. Parker

wasn't involved in developing the incentive plan and I don't know what's intended. Teachers' questions will have to wait.

Ed: I've been kidding you on being paranoid about teachers' questions, but do you know what I think?

Arnold: You're paranoid too!

Ed: Well, maybe. But I do think there's a standard list of questions going around. It just seems all the principals are getting exactly the same questions from teachers. I compared questions I was getting with Laura Jones at Terracotta Middle School. Her list was the same. Off the record, I'm not unhappy about the questions. They may help the school board and central office decide what they really want from the teacher incentive plan.

Arnold: You're beginning to sound like me. But I agree that the board and central office should get their act together. It seems that the board wants to remove those who don't belong in teaching—they think of it as, "get rid of the incompetents"—while the central office and teachers are pressing for a professional development approach to recognize and reward the best teachers in the district.

Ed: And you know who is going to get smashed when those two angles are rubbed together?

Arnold: Principals! Because we're caught in the middle between our roles of formal evaluator and professional developer.

Ed: Why doesn't somebody ask us to help put the plan's design and implementation together?

Arnold: By the way, Ed, as instructional leader of the school, how are you finding time to make two-hour evaluation visits to each of your teachers now that the administrative staff has been reduced? You have 75 teachers in your building. I only have 60.

Ed: I wouldn't admit this to anyone but you, my friend, but I'm really not sure how I'm supposed to act as instructional leader. My experience as assistant principal was all in discipline. For as long as I've been a

principal, I've had an assistant for instruction who was responsible for everything including evaluation.

When the board cut back on the number of assistants and central office supervisory positions last summer to put the money into career ladder salaries, I suddenly found myself with a #1 priority for which I'm not prepared.

I don't know why I automatically assumed the additional responsibility. After all, our job descriptions haven't been changed. . . yet.

Arnold: Hey, that's called efficiency—more work for those who survive!

Ed. . . ? Ed. . . ? You still there. . . ?

Yes, I am serious! I didn't say you had time to do anything else or even to do what you are supposed to be doing. I just said more work for those who survive. So you feel like you might not survive?

Ed: Right. I feel like I've reached my level of incompetence without moving laterally or arabesquely, much less vertically, in the organization.

Where's Lawrence Peter? I've got a new move for him: It's the Gathering Pirouette. More work as you move in circles.

Wouldn't it be nice if someone evaluated principals so that we could at least have the opportunity to talk about our needs and maybe get some help where we need it?

Arnold: Well, I've come to the conclusion ***again*** that many central office types and most researchers just don't know what the great majority of our schools are really like. They certainly don't know what principals like you and me ***have*** to do just to get 1,500 kids corralled every day.

I mean, is it before, after, or during instructional leadership that you see angry parents in your office?

Ed: I've decided it's ***after***, if instructional leadership is really #1. Besides that, some parents are going to get so steamed when they can't see me right away that they're going to get in their cars, drive to the central

office, and vent their steam there! Then maybe we'll get some of the assistant principals back.

Arnold: Or our pink slips! Have you thought about that?

Ed: Believe it or not, I have been thinking not about pink slips, but thinking. If everyone really believes that we principals are so important to effective classrooms and schools, why don't they help us with the kind of things we need to gear up?

Arnold: Haven't you seen NASSP's *Instructional Leadership Handbook*? It's really pretty good; spells everything out.

Ed: Yes I have, but no time to really get into it. Well, at least I haven't ***made*** the time.

Arnold: What I really worry about is that everybody will expect us to plan inservice for each of our buildings separately. And deal with teacher questions about the incentive plan.

Ed: I'm not reluctant about teacher questions, but I absolutely refuse to deal with principals' questions.

Arnold: Speaking of paranoia! Let me tell you what I overheard yesterday in the teachers' lounge. I heard Eugenia Holmes, our local shop steward, and Violette Strahan, our building's gift to the lonely hearts club, talking when they thought I wasn't listening.

Eugenia said that it was the union's position to oppose the career ladder/master teacher plan. Basically, because it did nothing as currently designed to professionalize teaching and because it lacked teacher involvement.

Ed: That could explain the standard questions—oppose the plan even before it is developed; question it to death.

Arnold: Well, maybe. Anyway, in addition to those two basic complaints, I heard two or three others, some of which were good news. Which would you like first? The good news? Or the rumors?

Ed: How about the rumors first. I want to go away feeling good.

Arnold: Okay. The rumors: Paperwork will be opposed vigorously. Teachers feel they have more than enough administratively-generated paperwork now without more record keeping.

Sound familiar?

Ed: No. My teachers love paperwork. It's therapy from having to love kids all day. Seriously, I suppose principals will have more record keeping too. What else?

Arnold: Teachers are betting that no clear relationship will be established between performance and rewards. So the *selected* few who apply for advancement up the career ladder will just develop slick PR portfolios that look good but have little substance. They're betting the medium, not the message, gets the money.

Ed: Hum! If the criteria for each level aren't defined carefully, that approach may go farther than I'd like to believe possible. How about the good news?

Arnold: The good news is that teachers see the present plan as focusing too much on money. They say they also would like some nonmonetary recognition and improved working conditions.

Ed: Do you believe the two you overheard represent other teachers?

Arnold: Yes, I do. Contrary to what some of their formal position statements sound like, teachers generally want to take on responsibility, but they also want recognition for those who perform better.

Ed: What kinds of things were mentioned that don't cost money or that improve working conditions?

Arnold: Well, under improved working conditions I heard increased administrative support for instructional effort and eliminating things that make teaching difficult. My guess is that they want things like crisis classrooms for chronic discipline problems, fewer interruptions of class time by intercom announcements, offices or at least work areas for planning periods, and some upgrading of building comfort and appearance.

Ed: Listen, I would like to continue this edifying discussion, but my secretary just handed me a note saying that a parent is waiting on the other line to talk to me about placing his kid in our master teacher classes.

Arnold: Parents are really weird on your side of town; they never seem to get the right message. We don't even have master teachers—I mean educators—yet.

Ed: I know. But we'll still hear about it. See you tonight at the basketball game. I don't have to tell you who is going to win, do I?

Arnold: No! But I know. Goodbye.

Implications of the Scenario

When people do not understand programs they are required to operate, they complain and make mistakes. Obviously, Arnold and Ed have not been involved in planning the program, nor do they feel much commitment to it. They are apathetic, perhaps even alienated from the program, yet they will be in charge of operating it. They are unprepared to supervise and direct the program because they do not know what their specific role and functions are.

Little research is available on career ladder/master teacher programs. Yet principals will need some answers: What are the issues for principals? What questions ought principals ask themselves and others about these programs?

By investigating the issues and asking questions, principals can turn their complaints into problems, and that is a step forward. Problems at least have solutions, whether or not the means to achieve them are currently at hand.

The issues are discussed next. See the Appendix for a listing of the questions to ask.

II. *Issues for Principals*

For any program to be successful it must be well conceptualized and well implemented. The goals and purposes of the program must be clear and its progress must be carefully monitored.

Principals interested in promoting or supporting career ladder and master teacher plans must address several key issues.

1. Board of Education Philosophy

The philosophy and goals driving the creation and implementation of career ladder/master teacher programs demand careful identification and assessment. Goals of a program can vary and sometimes be in conflict with one another. Boards of education, for example, often expect career ladder/master teacher programs to weed out incompetent teachers.

The most ringing phrase in *A Nation at Risk* declaimed that ". . . the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity. . . . Too many teachers are being drawn from the bottom quarter of graduating high school and college students."

The commission recommended increasing salaries and differentiating them, "so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated."

The goals of reducing incompetence and improving the quality of teaching and learning pose specific problems for boards of education and principals. What should the district philosophy be for eliminating incompetence and rewarding excellence? What incentives should be used to reach these goals? On what principles should the incentive program be developed?

Palaich and Flannelly (1984) have suggested several potential goals for career ladder/master teacher programs:

- ☐ Improving teaching and learning
- ☐ Improving the school as an organization
- ☐ Changing the characteristics of the teacher work force
- ☐ Building community confidence in the school.

Each of these goals implies a different philosophy or rationale and would involve a different evaluation and reward system. A simple "weed out the incompetents" philosophy would not

support all four goals very well. Neither would a singly focused professional development philosophy. Boards of education need to establish a stable, consistent philosophy with complementary goals and methods. Principals can assist by pointing out the conflicts, inconsistencies, and costs of differing philosophies, goals, and evaluation systems.

Teachers have a strong sense of equity and fairness. Most teachers do not believe that those specialists in short supply (e.g., electronics, mathematics, and science teachers) should be paid more simply because they can demand more in the marketplace. This sense of equity may clash with a board's ideology, generating dissension and undermining morale.

Differential treatment must be justified if it is to be accepted. Principals and teachers should have input into the development of a board's philosophy and goals in order to provide insight about the content, substance, and acceptability of the goals.

Robinson (1983) suggests three guidelines for the use of merit pay that should be incorporated in any incentive plan for teachers:

1. Merit pay is no substitute for an adequate base salary scale for all competent teachers.
2. Merit pay is not intended as a financial penalty against teachers whose performance is unsatisfactory.
3. Merit pay does not replace an effective evaluation process designed to help teachers improve their performance.

The philosophy, goals, and evaluation of a career ladder/master teacher program should be straightforward to provide real incentive to teachers rather than create dissension and undermine morale.

Implications for Principals

As the building level administrators of career ladder/master teacher programs, principals should take the following steps:

- Know the board of education's philosophy for the district's program. Be part of its formation if possible.
- Try to determine unannounced agendas in the district policy. Conflicting goals, whether announced or unannounced, can lead to conflict.
- Be sensitive to possible conflict of equity between teachers and the board of education. Resolve or manage conflicts that arise to minimize dissension and lowered morale.

2. Evaluation of Teaching

The central issue for principals administering a career ladder/master teacher program is evaluation of teaching. What are the purposes of the evaluation? What are the criteria, standards, and instruments of evaluation? How will the evaluation be planned, implemented, and monitored?

Defining the purposes of teacher evaluation is critical. The results of evaluation can serve a wide variety of (sometimes) competing or conflicting purposes. Evaluations may be used, for example, to encourage individual development (formative evaluation), or to increase individual and institutional accountability (summative evaluation). Buser (1984) indicates that the purposes of evaluation can include staff development, communication of organizational expectations, modification of job objectives and behavioral patterns, acknowledgment of performance, determination of employment status, fulfillment of mandates, and inservice training.

The purpose of evaluation should be reflected in its application. If the purpose is to improve teaching, improved teaching efficiency should be rewarded. If the purpose is increased student achievement, higher test scores or grades should be rewarded. If enhanced school climate is the goal, improved teacher morale and community support should be rewarded.

The criteria and standards of evaluation should be differentiated by career level in career ladder or master teacher programs. The criteria and standards should be coordinated with the purpose(s) of evaluation. Common sense dictates that the criteria should include meaningful teaching behaviors and be free of favoritism. The evaluation standards should reflect the levels of teaching proficiency requisite for each criterion.

The evaluation instruments should meet acceptable levels of validity, reliability, and utility. Does the instrumentation appraise the desired results, yield consistent profiles, and provide data that are worth the costs? Principals should assess just how general or specific the observations should be and what type of evidence will be accepted for the evaluation. A variety of evaluation techniques are in use, the most common being direct observation of performance.

Videotaping, student evaluation, peer evaluation, and even self-assessment are also employed. Principals and teachers—and perhaps central office supervisors, students, parents, or board members—should be involved in the planning, imple-

mentation, evaluation, and revision of the evaluation system itself. A collegial process helps to build political acceptance as well as a professional commitment to the system of evaluation.

The entire system should be reviewed by an oversight or appeals/grievance committee. Principals may or may not participate in the review or appeals process, but at the least should be apprised of the details of any review.

Most career ladder/master teacher programs are new and tend to require adjustments in the roles played by administrators, supervisors, central office personnel, peer teacher evaluators, and consultants. Role ambiguity is a common cause of conflict in the programs so responsibilities on all levels should be carefully defined and coordinated.

In many ways, the success of a career ladder/master teacher plan will depend on the quality of the evaluation process. The principal and/or evaluation coordinator must recognize a working, as well as a failing, evaluation system.

In a detailed 1984 Rand Corporation study, Wise and associates reported the following similarities of evaluation systems that work. Successful programs:

1. Provide top-level leadership and institutional resources for the evaluation process.
2. Ensure that evaluators have the necessary expertise to perform their tasks.
3. Structure administrator-teacher collaboration toward a common understanding of evaluation goals and processes.
4. Employ an evaluation process and a support system that are compatible with each other and with the district's overall goals and organizational context.

The Rand study also found several major problems with teacher evaluation systems:

1. Principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately.
2. Teachers were resistant or apathetic.
3. Evaluation practices lacked uniformity and consistency within the school system.
4. Evaluators were inadequately trained.
5. Generalists (i.e., principals) had difficulty assessing the competence of specialists, (i.e., teachers of secondary-level chemistry, mathematics, language, etc.).

Evaluation of teaching is frequently an uncomfortable experience for all participants. But significant benefits accrue along with the problems, such as better administrator-teacher communication and better relations between teacher unions and the school district. Consensus on instructional and school goals is usually strengthened. Teachers benefit from improved instructional abilities. The public gains confidence in the school system.

Implications for Principals

Principals play a major role in any working evaluation system. Several factors should be considered in developing an evaluation system for career ladder/master teacher programs:

- A clear statement of purpose is important to help the principal focus squarely on the tasks of evaluation and to avoid role conflict.
- Criteria and related standards of evaluation should be explicit and accepted by all parties.
- Teachers should be involved in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision of the system.
- A review or appeals process should be instituted to keep evaluations on target.
- Job descriptions of evaluators should be carefully defined.
- Principals should be trained both cognitively and affectively to be instructional evaluators.

3. Teacher Incentives and Rewards

Extrinsic forms of compensation such as pay, praise, and recognition through awards, titles, promotion, or advancement are important as incentives or rewards for worthy behavior. In reviewing research findings from more than half a century, Katz and Kahn (1978) report that extrinsic rewards and incentives improve performance in many occupations: "Pay for performance leads to an increase in performance."

Young teachers often downplay extrinsic rewards and incentives, particularly pay incentives, but as their financial obligations increase, income becomes more important. Career ladder/master teacher programs offer opportunities for promotion and greater compensation to members of a profession that until recently was considered a dead-end occupation.

Incentive pay, promotion, and recognition are only partial elements of a responsible program. Adequate base pay is also

critical to attracting able beginning teachers and retaining the most qualified among experienced teachers. Base pay is the floor on which the rest of the compensation plan is built. It is important to emphasize, however, that across-the-board raises do not always motivate sustained, high levels of performance.

Even when base pay is considered adequate, Katz and Kahn point out that three conditions must be present for performance-based compensation to motivate and reward good teaching:

1. The reward must be viewed as valuable and important to the individual.
2. The individual must see a clear relationship between the reward and the required task.
3. The amount of the reward must be great enough to compensate the individual for the effort to accomplish the required task.

The range of rewards—extrinsic and intrinsic—available to career ladder/master teacher programs is great. Because individuals differ in the rewards they value, career ladder/master teacher programs need a broad array of incentives and rewards for recognizing teachers. The first task for the principal is finding out what rewards motivate each individual. Of equal importance is establishing a clear relationship between a reward and the required task. The criteria and standards of performance should be clearly spelled out and followed.

Career ladder/master teacher programs can be expensive. The amount of the incentive or reward must be large enough to incite interest and action. A person may value a reward, even see the relationship between reward and task, and yet believe the reward not worth the effort. Principals should involve teachers in setting reward levels, and in recommending and conferring the various rewards.

Some problems are associated with all extrinsic reward systems. Duckett (1984) has suggested that money and status can become more important than performing job tasks. In many career ladder/master teacher programs, this would mean that the goal of improved teaching would be displaced by the goal of increased pay or status. On the other hand, several researchers have suggested that money is a ***disincentive*** to professional change. These researchers claim that the best incentive for improved teaching is not salary but intrinsic forms of motivation.

Another shortcoming of extrinsic incentives is that teachers denied promotions or pay increases can be expected to pursue grievance/appeal routes, especially if they feel that denial was arbitrary or capricious. In reality, many of the problems of career ladder/master teacher incentives are unexplored and untested at this time. Some teachers will undoubtedly take their grievances to court.

Finally, teachers may resent the concept itself. Teachers generally have a strong sense of fairness about the relationship between job tasks performed and the amount of compensation. Most teachers believe, for example, that mathematics and science teachers should ***not*** be paid more than other teachers even if the job market makes it difficult to attract and retain these specialists. Teachers also tend to reject quotas for career ladder steps or master teacher appointments, particularly if the number of teachers who can qualify for a reward is severely limited.

Implications for Principals

Principals implementing a career ladder/master teacher program should take the following steps to address the problems inherent in this extrinsic reward system:

- Communicate with individual teachers to learn what kinds of compensation each values.
- Balance organizational goal demands with individual job task preferences.
- Demonstrate clearly the relationship between job performance and rewards conferred.
- Utilize a wide range of extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and rewards.
- Be alert to teachers' sense of fairness and any perceived problems with the compensation scheme.
- Anticipate grievances/appeals by keeping adequate documentation.

4. Teacher Morale

Motivation can stem from either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a state of affairs, but morale is built only on satisfaction and success. Personal job satisfaction ordinarily leads to good organizational morale. In *The American Heritage Dictionary,* morale is defined as, "The state of the spirits of an individual or group, as shown in willingness to perform assigned tasks, confidence, cheerfulness, and discipline."

Morale can exist on the individual or group level. Teacher morale on both levels is important to a career ladder/master teacher program. Staff dissension is one of the primary reasons why merit pay plans have failed.

Specifically, teacher morale suffers when jealousy and charges of favoritism create friction among staff members. Some critics charge that all incentive pay programs emphasize individual performance at the expense of cooperative teamwork. For this and the other reasons listed above, these programs are sometimes opposed by teacher unions.

A nationwide survey conducted in 1984 by Louis Harris showed that morale of school teachers is somewhat lower than it might be. The job satisfaction of teachers nationally is lower than that of working people in general.

Eighty-one percent of teachers are reported to be "somewhat satisfied" with their jobs (40 percent are "very satisfied"). Comparable figures for the working public are 87 and 52 percent respectively. Teachers overwhelmingly "love to teach" (96 percent), and feel they are "usually recognized for good performance" (70 percent). Yet, they say they "have to spend too much time on administrative tasks" (73 percent), that their jobs do not "allow them the opportunity to earn a decent salary" (63 percent), and that they are not "respected in today's society" (53 percent). Perhaps most important for job satisfaction and morale, a 53 percent majority of teachers said they would not "advise a young person to pursue a career in teaching."

Research shows that teachers in effective schools collaborate, interact, experiment, analyze, and collegially evaluate the teaching process. Effective schools also tend to discourage the kind of unhealthy competition among teachers that causes them to isolate themselves in classrooms.

In "Political Myths About Reforming the Teaching Profession," Rosenholtz (1984) commented:

> In collaborative settings, teachers interact whenever there is opportunity—in training sessions, faculty meetings, hallways, teachers' lounges, and classrooms. This interaction is based on professional concerns and involves more faculty than do the more social conversations in less effective schools. Requests for, and offers of, assistance are more frequent in collaborative schools than experience swapping. It seems that teachers garner fresh ideas from their colleagues rather than sympathy and social support.

Implications for Principals

A principal implementing a career ladder/master teacher program must carefully nurture teacher morale. Specifically, principals should pursue the following course of action:

- Assess the level of teaching satisfaction and success in the building. Signs of apathy or outright alienation should be addressed.
- Work to minimize friction, jealousy, and favoritism. Standards of performance should be the basis for rewards.
- Emphasize teacher teamwork, interaction, and collaboration for the improvement of teaching.
- Involve teachers cooperatively in the planning and the continuing assessment of the career ladder/master teacher program.
- Reduce administrative tasks assigned to teachers.
- Recognize teachers for good teaching.

5. District Commitment and Support

It is difficult for an individual principal to remain highly committed to and supportive of a career ladder/master teacher program if that commitment and support are not shown by the district as a whole. A good clue to the level of district commitment and support is the level of compatibility between the district's goals and its compensation system. Both goals and compensation system may be modified from time to time to address immediate public concerns, but continuing commitment and support are necessary.

Another indication of district commitment is the priority placed on evaluation. Teacher evaluation is central to a career ladder/master teacher program. Wise and colleagues (1984) report that "Top-level commitment to and resources for evaluation outweigh checklists and procedures." Sufficient time and resources must be available for thorough teacher evaluation, and principals should be rewarded when successful evaluation, consultation, and instructional improvement occur. The principal's evaluation findings should also be linked at the district level with other system elements such as goal setting, professional growth, and curriculum development.

Career ladder/master teacher programs must be adequately financed and open to all who qualify. The costs of career ladder/master teacher programs are average to high, and the staff time

required is generally high compared to most other teacher incentive options. A district committed to a career ladder/master teacher program should provide salary and recognition for teachers, evaluation time and resources for principals, adequate clerical support, co- and substitute teacher support for master teachers, and revised job descriptions for administrative and supervisory personnel.

Implications for Principals

Principals must be aware of the level of district and financial support required to implement career ladder/master teacher options. Specifically, principals should work closely with the superintendent and other district personnel to assure a smooth implementation of the program.

- Help the district to look carefully before it leaps into a premature career ladder/master teacher program. Investigate the time, resources, and costs involved; propose pilot projects whenever feasible.
- As adoption proceeds, assess and assure the compatibility of the district's goals with the needed levels of compensation.
- Insist that the principal's job description spell out responsibilities vis-à-vis other participants in the program.
- Establish personal time priorities in line with the district's commitment and support. Recognize that the principal can hardly remain more committed and supportive than the district administration.
- Seek and utilize all available district resources to ensure the success of the program.

6. Parental Involvement

Direct parental involvement in a school's teacher incentive program is not likely to be as great as indirect involvement through the board of education. The experience of some programs indicates, however, that some parents want to influence advancement decisions. The 16th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward Public Schools listed seven criteria for awarding teacher pay based on special merit. Of the seven criteria, "Parents' Opinions" was rated lowest by respondents. Yet, more than one in three (36 percent) thought parents' opinions should be included as a criterion.

Principals commonly receive requests from parents for their youngsters to be assigned to certain teachers. Some parents are likely to nominate their favorite teachers for advancement and recognition. They may write letters of support as teachers are considered for rewards, or vote their convictions as new monies are requested for teacher incentive programs.

Parents, whether asked or not, rate and rank teachers each year, although they often use different evaluative criteria than those used by principals. In a study conducted at the Center for Social Organization of Schools, Epstein (1984) found some agreement between parents and principals in the identification of strong and weak teachers. But sharp differences existed in the criteria used. Parents generally gave high ratings to teachers who maintained regular communications with parents, who sustained good classroom discipline, and who taught in other than city schools.

Epstein also found that parents emphasized teachers' work with young people, whereas principals often stressed teachers' work in relation to their peers. Epstein commented that "the public's involvement in the financing of education makes it critical to consider the public's involvement in the rating of teachers' merits." Other research also suggests that parents can provide important information for evaluating teachers.

Implications for Principals

Parental involvement should be expected in the formation and implementation of any career ladder/master teacher program. Principals should take several steps to ensure that the interaction will be beneficial.

- Anticipate that some parents will want their opinions strongly considered in the formation and implementation of program decisions. Suggest and/or prepare policies that spell out ways parents can and will be involved.
- The assignment of students to senior career ladder/master teacher instructors will be of greater significance to parents ambitious for their children. Careful planning will be necessary to deploy master teachers' talents.
- Parents may be able to offer a fuller and richer base from which to judge individual teacher merit. Principals may wish to develop a systematic way to incorporate supplemental information from parents in the teacher evaluation process.

7. Principals' Professional Concerns

The adoption of a career ladder/master teacher program will mean new responsibilities and new roles for the school principal. New roles and responsibilities often demand knowledge and skill development. Principals will want to appraise their personal and professional development needs. This appraisal may include self-assessment based on the requirements of the job, as well as system assessment performed by supervisors, peers, and patrons. Collegial assessment, performed by one's school staff, can also be helpful. Examples of each type of assessment follow.

Self-assessment: Based on Job Demands

- ☐ Goals met and discarded
- ☐ Goals not yet met and to be addressed
- ☐ Problems surfacing
- ☐ Professional reading
- ☐ Professional conferences and meetings
- ☐ Intuitive reactions.

System assessment: Performed by Supervisors

- ☐ Periodic formal and informal evaluations of performance
- ☐ Accreditation reports and recommendations
- ☐ Job description changes
- ☐ Mutual concerns of principal and supervisor
- ☐ Principal's comments at meetings.

Collegial assessment: Performed by School Staff

- ☐ School's goals met and not yet met
- ☐ Personal characteristics
- ☐ Professional characteristics
- ☐ Perceptions of principal's job performance.

When the principal's roles and responsibilities change, so too do the roles and responsibilities of those who work with the principal. Master teachers, for example, who acquire new duties such as evaluation of teaching and instructional improvement will need knowledge and skill development. Assessment can lead to a professional development agenda for principals, their associates, and the staff as well. For principals, the agenda might include the following topics:

1. School goals and mission
2. Professional development needs of staff and administration
3. Evaluation of teaching, both content and process

4. School learning climate and student achievement
5. Instructional leadership and teaching effectiveness.

Principals are likely to feel most concerned about new or changed relationships arising from career ladder/master teacher programs. Principals may experience heightened role conflict if their supervisory or administrative functions are not adequately differentiated. New relationships with teachers will involve performance evaluations, professional development, and the setting of school priorities.

Central or area office staff may undergo reorganization. New communication networks with other principals may be formed for assessment of knowledge and skills, further training, and exchange of research information. State departments of education may enter the picture by establishing criteria for teaching credentialing, evaluation, and promotion, as well as fiscal and reporting requirements. New relationships and responsibilities create pressures.

Principals usually will be cast as the program leaders—instructional leaders in a very real sense. Accordingly, principals must take the lead in setting school goals, evaluating teaching, supervising curriculum and instruction, and developing the school staff and administration professionally. Ideally, principals will also be directly involved in the continuing evaluation and development of the entire program.

Implications for Principals

Principals will experience a number of professional pressures in implementing a career ladder/master teacher program. A few steps will help principals make the program more successful:

- Acknowledge that new roles and new responsibilities require new knowledge and skills. Assess the situation and build a personal agenda for continuing professional development.
- Help the administrative team and teachers who are also experiencing new roles and responsibilities to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.
- Anticipate the demands of new relationships and role conflicts. The principal's voice must be heard in planning, implementing, and evaluating the career ladder/master teacher program.
- Aspire to the role of program leader. Someone will lead; it should be the principal.

III. *A Working Career Ladder/ Master Teacher Program*

School districts, even states, are currently in the process of formulating and implementing career ladder/master teacher programs. Yet no current program is mature enough, tested and modified by time and experience, to provide an appropriate model for others to emulate. An ideal program would reflect the elements discussed in the first half of this manuscript:

- Board of education philosophy
- Evaluation of teaching
- Teacher incentives and rewards
- Teacher morale
- District commitment and support
- Parental involvement
- Principal's professional pressures.

Since no ideal program exists, we will fashion a scenario to illustrate how such a program might look and operate. The scenario that follows assumes a well-planned, well-conducted career ladder/master teacher program. The issues discussed above are addressed here in an enthusiastic dialog on the philosophy, resources, and program of Athens School District.

Scenario Two

Acropolis High School has just concluded an on-site evaluation by a visiting team as part of the regional accreditation process. The visiting team chair, Barbara Jones, principal of neighboring Sparta High School, is about to present an exit report of the team's findings and recommendations. Assembled are Acropolis High School principal Patrick Holmes, assistant principal George Gomez, director of guidance and vocational education John Stein, special programs director William Chin, dean of students Richard King, self-evaluation steering committee chair Anne Burroughs, board of education chair Terry Duke, board secretary Mary Callaway, and superintendent of schools Alonzo Walker.

Mr. Holmes: (Acropolis Principal) We have spent a challenging and exciting week with our visiting evaluation team, and we are looking forward to hearing their findings and recommendations. Ms. Jones, I'm going to turn the meeting over to you so that we can hear your report and discuss the findings with you.

Ms. Jones: (Visiting Committee Chair) I'll be pleased to do that, Mr. Holmes. First, I want to share with you the one overriding impression of the visiting team. The school staff and administration of Acropolis High School are as open, candid, and professional as any group of educators we've ever encountered. You are "in gear" and moving toward the goals you have set for yourselves. The team appreciated your candor and strong sense of commitment. I shall try to be as forthright and helpful in my comments as you were during our evaluation visit. Please ask questions any time you wish during my remarks.

To begin, let me assure you that you are substantially meeting the evaluative criteria specified in the regional association manual. We were able, almost without exception, to confirm the observations reported by your self-study committees. This is commendable in its own right—that you are meeting regional accrediting standards. But in addition to the standards, you have set for yourselves what you call "Goals for Educational Excellence." These goals relate primarily to your new career ladder program for both teachers and administrators. I would like to focus the majority of my remarks on these self-selected goals.

Ms. Burroughs: (Steering Committee Chair) Ms. Jones, representing the steering committee that prepared the self-study reports, may I ask a question?

Ms. Jones: Surely.

Ms. Burroughs: If you intend to comment today mainly on Acropolis' Goals for Educational Excellence, will your written report address the self-study committee reports?

Ms. Jones: Yes, and in detail. It's just that we have limited time this morning and. . . .

Ms. Burroughs: That's fine. I understand. I was concerned that the hard work of the self-study committees might go unrecognized. A part of what our career ladder program has done is encourage people to expect recognition for their extra efforts. I'm pleased to hear that recognition will extend to your written report. It will be a good morale boost.

Ms. Jones: You already have great morale at Acropolis, and our written report will surely not hurt it. Any other questions at this point?

Hearing none, I will proceed with your excellence goals.

First, you have a well-planned career ladder program. The goals, objectives, and purposes are clearly stated and understood by everyone in the district. Not only are minimum competence and performance specified for each rung of the career ladder, but superior teaching or excellent performance is described for the top of each step, including Master Teacher and Master Administrator. The board of education has repeatedly indicated its support—perhaps insistence is the right word—for recognizing excellent work and offering incentives to elicit that kind of performance.

So has your superintendent, Alonzo Walker. Dr. Walker has seen to it that clear policies are in place for the career ladder program, and that sufficient resources have been allocated. For example, explicit job descriptions have been rewritten specifying roles and responsibilities. Everyone knows who is responsible for what in the program and what

relationships are established both within the building and with the central office.

Some discretionary funds have been allocated to the buildings. Acropolis High School can employ co- and substitute teachers when master teachers are engaged in curriculum development and instructional improvement. This allocation of working funds directly to the school has eliminated much paperwork and has made the principal's job of facilitating professional development much easier.

In sum, the mission is well-defined and commitment to the career ladder program exists at all levels.

Mr. Duke: (Board Chair) It's good to hear that something the board of education has supported is both understood and appreciated. The board often makes decisions about pressing matters, but sometimes we forget to take stock of the effects of our decisions. I'm delighted about what you have to say, because the career ladder program is the result of a collective effort by teachers, principals, parents, and central office personnel.

In fact, George Gomez, the Acropolis assistant principal, chaired the teacher incentive planning committee that recommended our career ladder/master teacher plan. Congratulations, Mr. Gomez, for proposing such a good idea.

Mr. Gomez: (Acropolis Assistant Principal) Along with Mr. Duke, I'm very pleased that you like our teacher incentive plan. Maybe all the arguments—strike that—***debates*** our committee engaged in were worth the effort and occasional fractured feelings. We know that excellence comes from commitment and hard work; our planning committee had plenty of both qualities.

Ms. Jones: Well, the results certainly seem worth the effort.

May I proceed to the second section of our report?

You obviously understood from the beginning that a successful career ladder for teachers rests on the systematic evaluation of teaching. I say *obviously* because you set a goal to initiate "sound and acceptable evaluation of teaching." Toward that goal, you designated the principal as the primary evaluator, and established a clear-cut process to assess the validity, reliability, and effectiveness of both the evaluations and the evaluation system itself.

At Acropolis High, the building level evaluation team—Mr. Holmes or Mr. Gomez, the relevant department chair, one master teacher, and a central office supervisor—must agree on the final evaluation report for each teacher for each year. Requiring consensus of four viewpoints gathered over a year's time through at least two classroom observations is an effective checkpoint and serves as a primary safeguard.

The central office provides another evaluation checkpoint. A team of supervisors, district teachers, and outside consultants also reviews all the evaluations from each high school. On occasion, the central office team has given Mr. Holmes and Mr. Gomez suggestions for improving individual evaluations or some aspect of the evaluation system itself.

Because teachers were involved in planning the system and participate in the review process, they told us repeatedly that they are willing for the principal to be the primary evaluator. The visiting team also recognized that much of the teachers' confidence in Mr. Holmes reflects his obvious competence and his resolve to do a sound job of evaluation. Mr. Holmes and his evaluation team have consistently recognized both good and poor teaching.

They have made reasonable recommenda-

tions for instructional improvement based on their evaluations and administer a system that works well both for teachers and administrators. Part of this success is having clear policies in place and budgetary supports that provide master teachers with released time to do peer evaluations and offer clerical assistance to process the paperwork of the system.

Mr. Stein: (Guidance and Vocational Education Director) The group here this morning would probably anticipate a question like this from me as a counselor. But, what about the evaluations for ***administrators*** in their career ladder program?

What I mean is: Do they really have involvement in this system? Are there checkpoints as in the teacher evaluation system? And are Mr. Holmes' and Mr. Gomez's assessments based on building-level administrator appraisals?

Ms. Jones: The answer is "yes" to all of your questions. Mr. Holmes chaired the administrative career ladder planning committee for the entire district, and Mr. King, dean of students, serves as chair of the Athens Administrative Professional Development Committee. There is only one checkpoint for the administrative system at the central office level. But it seems to be working well. The department chairs, deans, and directors as well as Mr. Gomez and Mr. Holmes all expressed general satisfaction with the review process.

As with teachers, administrators also have a formal grievance procedure, external to the evaluation process, to handle charges of unfairness, bias, etc. And yes, administrative professional development plans are based on the results of administrative evaluations.

Mr. Stein: One thing we've tried to do at Acropolis High School is to link the results of all evaluations—be they administrator, teacher, service personnel, student polls, or community

surveys—with school goals, curriculum revision, and professional development. Did that "come through" to your visiting committee? Were you able to confirm that?

Ms. Jones: Yes. What I meant at the outset about your school being positively engaged—"in gear"—has to do with the articulation you're speaking about. With the backing of the superintendent, Mr. Holmes has been the strategic planner for the school, relating evaluations to goal accomplishment, curriculum development, and staff inservice. Compatibility is orchestrated among all the elements of the system.

Both the schools and the district agreed, for example, that paperwork was unintentionally hindering the delivery of instruction (the opposite of what career ladder was intended to do). The system was modified and most career ladder paperwork is now handled by clerical aides in the school office.

Another instance of good management is the handling of teacher apathy—burnout. Your school, along with others in the district, now offers a teacher exchange program with a neighboring district and American schools overseas. Teachers have the opportunity to receive special project funds just by submitting a brief description of the idea to the building principal. A number of projects and mini-projects have been funded this year, helping to rejuvenate teachers' motivation and energies.

A final illustration of good program linkages is the Parent Academic Response-Excellence Project (PAR-Excellence) headed by Mr. Chin. Teacher interviews consistently pointed up a lack of adequate parental support for strong student achievement. Last fall, parents were asked to spend one hour in a workshop designed to teach them how to support effective instruction. Two-thirds of

the families in the school had representation at the meetings, and half of those who attended volunteered to assist with teacher projects.

Volunteers have helped kids to overcome reading problems or to locate books in the library; they have answered the phone and typed reports in the school office; they have presented demonstrations for students in areas of their own expertise. But above all, they have communicated with the school about problems their kids were having.

Mr. Chin's office handles numerous calls. The attitude of parents has been very positive. A PAR-Excellence Report is attached to every computer-generated grade report sent to parents—ways parents can support instruction at Acropolis High School. Parents are beginning to have a new appreciation of the school staff because they have heard, and some have seen first-hand, what you are doing.

One spinoff of Mr. Holmes' efforts to coordinate is that he is genuinely perceived by teachers to be an instructional leader. Why? Because they are experiencing new success in teaching. The principal is deliberately facilitating the integration of school goals, curriculum and professional development, and staff evaluation.

Mr. Chin: (Special Programs Director)

Ms. Jones, something I have noticed since our PAR-Excellence began is that we are now getting a number of calls from parents to say that they tried what teachers suggest will help their students, and it works. They are convinced that the school staff addresses their concerns, and they want the appropriate persons to receive the credit.

Parents are beginning to see teachers and other effective staff members progress up the rungs of the career ladder. They like that and want to support it even more.

Ms. Callaway: (Board Secretary) As a parent and school board member, I would like to speak for the Acropolis school community. People here are enthusiastic about Acropolis High's career ladder program. They have seen the whole school staff actively plan and implement a program that they view as fair. The school board originally thought of the career ladder program as a way of removing incompetents—and that has occurred—but it has evolved into one that recognizes outstanding performance, thanks to teacher/administrator collaboration. Teacher and administrator job satisfaction is increasing and student achievement is beginning to improve.

Ms. Jones: Ms. Callaway, thank you for anticipating my final comments.

Job satisfaction is increasing among Acropolis teachers and administrators. The visiting committee was so intrigued by this fact that we have speculated on the reasons. If you will allow me to read a handwritten list, I will summarize our thinking.

First, the Acropolis school staff is experiencing instructional success. This success has led to further commitment and enhanced performance.

Second, a clear relationship has been established between the performance criteria of your career ladder program and the rewards teachers and administrators value. The rewards are both extrinsic (primarily higher pay) and intrinsic (mainly teacher and/or administrator-initiated projects to encourage self-expression—the projects and mini-projects I referred to earlier).

Third, the criteria for performance evaluation at the various career ladder levels (both teachers and administrators) are demanding yet explicit. No quotas exist for the ranks, and anyone who meets the criteria can qualify.

Fourth, teacher curriculum and instruction teams have the authority to analyze, to experiment, and to use new skills as they are learned. Almost everyone has realized increased performance and success; in other words, they are doing more and better work.

Fifth, teachers and administrators worked together to plan the career ladder program and still collaborate to improve it.

Sixth, contrary to early fears that teachers might further isolate themselves because of the competition, staff members are willingly working together and applauding each other's accomplishments. Collegial efforts have given participants variety, responsibility, and challenge.

Finally, applications for career ladder advancement and recognition are high. Acropolis teachers and administrators like the idea of recognition for achieving personal and professional goals. Most are committed to staying at the school and doing a better job.

You are very much to be commended.

Mr. Holmes: Thank you very much, Ms. Jones, for your report. We appreciate your supportive remarks. I noticed that you did not cite any specific *recommendations*. Do you have any to make?

Ms. Jones: Yes. We will make two recommendations.

First, with things going so well, you may be tempted to relax and rest on your laurels. We suggest that you remain very goal and task-oriented. Continue to evaluate problems as they appear and make useful changes as appropriate.

Second, view your career ladder program as a means to an end, not an end in itself. The real goal is improved teaching and learning. Capitalize on and strengthen your program as long as it serves administrators, teachers, and students, but be ready to consider new means when necessary.

Mr. Holmes:	Are there any other questions or comments for Ms. Jones?
Mr. Walker: (Athens Superintendent)	Acropolis High School has received significant recognition today from the visiting evaluation team. The school has exemplified professional commitment and responsibility in ways that make all of us proud. Congratulations!

Implications of the Scenario

The career ladder/master teacher program described in this scenario is a success for a number of good reasons:

1. Organizational commitment to the incentive program exists at all levels.
2. The goals of the program are well-formulated and well-understood.
3. Appropriate policies and resources are available to support the program's goals.
4. The principal and the evaluation team are competent, fair, and purposeful.
5. The principal is viewed as the instructional leader of the school. The principal's office coordinates goals, curriculum, professional development, and evaluation.
6. Teachers and administrators have collaborated in the planning, operation, and fine tuning of the program.
7. Teachers and administrators are experiencing job success and satisfaction.
8. Teachers and administrators are receiving rewards, both extrinsic and intrinsic, for the work they are doing.

The scenario also illustrates many of the elements necessary for a successful teacher incentive plan. Robinson (1984) cites several of these factors:

- ☐ Effective evaluation procedures
- ☐ Competent teacher corps
- ☐ Adequate basic salary levels
- ☐ Well-defined educational objectives
- ☐ Board and management commitment
- ☐ Staff involvement in program development
- ☐ Plausible definitions of superior performance
- ☐ Valid measurements of results
- ☐ Effective measures of student performance

- ☐ Objective and consistent teacher assessment
- ☐ Adequate financing
- ☐ Availability to all who qualify
- ☐ Continuous review.

IV. *Conclusion*

Career ladder/master teacher programs address the recommendations of many recent national reports that teachers' salaries should be differentiated by quality of performance. Career ladder/master teacher programs are flexible and can be designed to address a range of state, district, and/or school goals. They seem to work best if teachers and administrators have active involvement in their design, development, and evaluation. If properly planned and implemented, they have the potential to encourage and reward good teaching, and to retain the most successful among teachers and administrators.

Career ladder/master teacher programs are not inexpensive. They demand a good deal of time and money. Consequently, they should not be entered into haphazardly. Of the three generic types of incentives and rewards—rules and regulations, extrinsic rewards, and intrinsic rewards—career ladder/master teacher programs favor extrinsic rewards. Those teachers who perform well receive pay, praise, and promotion.

Administrators, especially principals, experience new demands on their time and resources in career ladder/master teacher programs. Principals must have the necessary time, expertise, resources, and determination for a program to work. They must evaluate teaching, reward successful performance, and work to improve unsatisfactory teaching. The results of evaluation must be coordinated with other important school activities such as goal setting, curriculum development, and staff inservice. Enterprising principals will use all the incentives and rewards available to them, including intrinsic motivators such as the new criteria for teaching excellence.

Principals should realistically appraise the levels of teacher, community, parent, board of education, and district commitment to a career ladder/master teacher program. These factors can greatly limit or enhance a program. Although most programs look to the principal for leadership, program success also depends on many others.

Principals must also look to their own professional development. New knowlege and skills may be necessary. Principal centers that provide practical skill update, that show principals how to apply research, and that offer professional support networks may be helpful to this development.

Finally, principals should remember that career ladder/mas-

ter teacher programs are largely experimental at this time. Principals should expect both anticipated and unanticipated consequences of their efforts. Uncertainty, however, should not restrain administrative effort to improve teaching and learning. Career ladder/master teaching programs are certainly among the most powerful new strategies for achieving the goals of effective instruction.

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Appendix: Questions To Ask

The questions on the following pages formed the basis for treatment of the issues discussed in Section III of this monograph.

- Board of Education Philosophy
- Evaluation of Teaching
- Teacher Incentives and Rewards
- Teacher Morale
- District Commitment and Support
- Parental Involvement
- Principal's Professional Concerns

The questions can be used as a self-assessment device by principals who are planning or implementing career ladder/master teacher programs. They can also be used to survey the perceptions of any of the groups affected by the planning or implementation process.

Board of Education Philosophy

1. Does the board of education have a stable career ladder/master teacher program philosophy? _____
2. Are "weed-out-the-incompetent" pressures balanced by teacher professional development concerns? _____
3. Is there pressure to reward teachers in short supply by moving them quickly up the ladder or to master teacher designation? _____
4. Are career ladder/master teacher salary incentives given real parity along with traditional salary schedule equity concerns? _____
5. Is there a discernible difference among board members as to what constitutes meritorious teaching? _____

   If so, what are the bases for the differences?

   Teacher subject matter knowledge? _____
   Teacher instructional methodology? _____
   Egalitarian/equity concerns? _____
   Board control? _____
   Teacher insubordination? _____

6. Is there a discernible difference in board member opinion about what kinds of teachers should advance on the career ladder or to master teacher? _____
7. Does the board of education set percentages or restrict the number of teachers who can qualify for career ladder/master teacher advancement? _____

Evaluation of Teaching

1. Is the purpose of the teacher evaluation system clear? _____
   Does the evaluation system serve more than one purpose? _____
   If so, are those purposes in conflict with each other? _____
2. Does the teacher evaluation system clearly define the characteristics of:
   Superior teaching? _____
   Minimal competence? _____
   Steps in between? _____
3. Are the evaluation instruments ***valid*** (produce desired results) in relation to the purposes of teacher evaluation? _____
4. Are the evaluation instruments ***reliable*** (yield consistent results) given the evaluators who use them? _____
5. Does the district have checkpoints (a review process) to determine whether teacher evaluations are valid and reliable? _____
6. Is the teacher evaluation system politically acceptable to:
   Teachers? _____
   Principals? _____
   The superintendent? _____
   The board of education? _____
   Parents generally? _____
7. Are the benefits of the teacher evaluation system worth the costs? _____
8. Are each person's responsibilities in the teacher evaluation system specified and understood? _____

9. Do teacher evaluation findings influence the school district's:
   - Professional development activities? _____
   - Curriculum and instruction management guides? _____
   - Goal-setting efforts? _____
10. Does the teacher evaluation system promote improved communication between principals and teachers about educational goals and classroom practices? _____
11. Is the principal the primary person responsible for teacher evaluation?
    If not, who is?
    - Assistant principal? _____
    - Subject supervisor? _____
    - Team of teachers? _____
    - Team of teachers and administrators? _____
12. Is evaluation of teaching seen by teachers as an instructional leadership function? _____
13. Is there a grievance procedure to address alleged unfair teacher evaluations? _____

Teacher Incentives and Rewards

1. Do teachers perceive a clear relationship between their professional performance and career ladder/master teacher rewards? _____
2. Are there quotas for the various career ladder levels or for the designation of master teacher? _____
   - If so, are the quotas fair and reasonable? _____
   - If so, are the quotas accepted by teachers? _____
   - If so, are quota cutoffs perceived as artificial? _____
3. Do the career ladder/master teacher incentives influence the best teachers to stay in teaching? _____
4. Has there been a discernible improvement in teaching as a result of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
5. Are money and status becoming more important than teaching itself as a result of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____

6. Are teacher evaluation results used to target incentives and rewards to the goals of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
7. Are extrinsic incentives or rewards, other than salary and status, used in the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
   If so, which are used:
   - Sabbaticals? _____
   - Teacher-initiated projects? _____
   - Travel for professional development? _____
   - Teacher-of-the-year awards? _____
   - Bonuses? _____
   - Mini-grants? _____
   - Summer employment? _____
   - Joint appointments with business/industry? _____
   - Increased publicity about teacher accomplishments? _____
   - Scholarships? _____
   - Loans? _____
   - Other? (Identify) _____ _____ _____
8. Are intrinsic rewards, in addition to extrinsic ones, used as motivators of better teaching? _____
   If so, which are used?
   - Job variety, responsibility, and challenge? _____
   - Participation in organizational goal setting? _____
   - Group work recognition? _____
   - Democratic decision making? _____
   - Quality circles? _____
   - Self-evaluation of performance? _____
   - Autonomy in teaching methodology? _____
   - Other? (Identify) _____ _____

Teacher Morale

1. Was acceptance by teachers secured as the career ladder/master teacher program was designed? _____
2. Do teachers see a tie between the career ladder/master teacher evaluation system and the totality of school district goals? _____
3. Do teachers see the career ladder/master teacher program focusing on classroom teaching rather than out-of-class activities? _____

4. Is advancement on the career ladder or designation as master teachers perceived positively by teachers? _____
5. Are teachers apathetic about advancing on the career ladder or to the position of master teacher? _____
6. Are those not promoted envious of advanced career ladder or master teachers? _____
7. Have teacher collaboration and shared work declined as a result of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
8. Does advancement on the career ladder or to master teacher result in talented teachers being removed from the classroom? _____
   If so, to what extent? 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, 30%, 40%, More? _____
9. Has provision been made to cushion reassignment of teachers downgraded on the career ladder or from master teacher? _____
10. Are teachers willing for the incompetent to be removed from the teaching ranks? _____
11. Has teacher time on administrative tasks increased in the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
12. Are teachers willing to collaborate with the administration to improve the quality of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____

District Commitment and Support

1. Is the school district committed at all levels to the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
2. Are the school district's goals and the career ladder/master teacher program complementary? _____
3. Do district job descriptions differentiate functions for career ladder ranks/master teacher designation? _____
4. Have policies been implemented to support all elements of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____

5. Has the school district rewritten job descriptions for administrative/supervisory personnel to support career ladder/master teacher program goals and responsibilities? _____
6. Are time and resources devoted to linking teacher evaluation, goal setting, professional inservice, and curricular and instructional development for compatibility among these school district programs? _____
7. Is administration of the career ladder/master teacher programs assigned as an "add-on" to the principal's office or is it a priority central to the district's mission? _____
8. Do principals have sufficient time to administer the career ladder/master teacher program requirements? _____
9. Do principals have adequate clerical support for the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
10. Are adequate co-teacher and/or substitute teacher funds available to support career ladder/master teacher out-of-classroom assignments (e.g., inservice workshops and peer evaluation responsibilities)? _____
11. Have principals been trained to be competent teacher evaluators for the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
12. Is remediation of undesirable teaching performances a high priority for the school administration? _____

Parental Involvement

1. Do parents expect to be involved in making career ladder advancement decisions/master teacher designations? _____
2. Are parents given a voice in teacher evaluations for career ladder/master teacher designations as a means of securing financial and political support for the school? _____

3. Do parents exert pressure to have their children assigned to advanced career ladder/master teacher instructors? _____
4. Do parents' criteria for assessing teacher effectiveness differ from those of school officials? _____

Principal's Professional Concerns

1. Were the principals of the district heard in the career ladder/master teacher program development process? _____
   If not, what were the reasons?

2. Have knowledge and skill development needs emerged for principals as a result of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
   If so, what are they?

3. Are there aspects of teacher evaluation about which I need more knowledge or skill? _____
   If so, what are they?

4. Are there elements of classroom effectiveness about which I need more knowledge? _____
   If so, what are they?

5. Has the career ladder/master teacher program motivated principals to establish relationships with principals' centers and other professional development institutions? _____
   If so, what institutions?

6. Has the career ladder/master teacher program promoted more direct relationships with the state department of education? _____
   If so, what relationships?

7. Has the career ladder/master teacher program necessitated more direct relationships with the school district's central or area office? _____
   If so, what relationships?

8. Are principals perceived as the career ladder/master teacher program leaders in their buildings? _____
   If not, who is?

9. Am I capable of evaluating both the teaching process (generalist) and the subject matter (specialized) aspects of the career ladder/master teacher program? _____
   If not, how are these demands met?

10. Has the career ladder/master teacher program caused role conflict for me as a principal? _____
    If so, what conflict(s)?